

**New Hampshire State Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301**

November 8, 2016

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP #SPED-2016-13**

**New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance
and Professional Development Initiative**

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: 4:00pm, Friday, December 9, 2016

Proposal Inquiries: Inquiries must begin with the heading “**New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development Initiative**” and should be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax (include your fax number) to:

Barbara Dauphinas, Program Specialist
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Fax: 603-271-1099
e-mail: Barbara.Raymond@doe.nh.gov

The deadline for receipt of Inquiries is 4:00pm, Friday, November 18, 2016. The New Hampshire Department of Education (**Department**) will address written inquiries received by the deadline and, if they are determined to be vital to the competitive bidding process, a written response will be sent no later than five (5) working days after the deadline. In addition, any modifications to the specifications contained in the RFP shall be made, in writing, by the Department immediately following the deadline for receipt of inquiries and no other changes will be entertained after that date. Verbal agreement or instructions from any other source are not authorized or binding on the State of New Hampshire (**State**).

All advisory committees, individuals and organizations are encouraged to distribute this Request for Proposals (RFP) to any/all qualified individuals/organizations.

Grant Award: The Department of Education (NHDOE) expects to award a three (3) year contract, effective July 1, 2017 or upon Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, through June 30, 2020, to the successful applicant. Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for the contract shall not exceed \$100,000.00 annually or \$300,000.00 total for the three year contract period.

Purpose and Priorities:

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals from individuals, agencies, or organizations (hereafter referred to as applicant(s)) to work in conjunction with the NH Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education (hereafter referred to as the Department) to develop and implement a statewide technical assistance (TA) and professional development (PD) system designed to increase the implementation of effective practices and enhance outcomes for students who are blind and visually impaired and their families.

The technical assistance (TA) and professional development (PD) system will be designed using universal design for learning principles and adult learning methods and strategies to:

- Coordinate and provide TA/PD for administrators/decision makers, families and professionals with information about federal statutes, policy guidance, and promising practices from the field of vision education;
- Contract with the National Association of State Directors of Special Education to coordinate and sponsor a New Hampshire Blind Education Initiative Project to provide technical assistance and training to schools and families with information about federal statutes, policy guidance, and promising practices from the field of blind education;
- Design trainings regarding the use of technology and the delivery of accessible materials for Teachers of the Visually Impaired and children with vision loss by providing training in Assistive Technology, and strategies in providing Accessible Materials based on a community of practice action research model.
- Develop and provide TA/PD around the New Hampshire Expanded Core Curriculum Resource Tool based on national models for schools and families to identify and support the unique needs of students who are blind and visually impaired with at least one statewide and regionally coaching opportunities available for districts, families and students;
- Partner with the New Hampshire Department of Education in the promotion of current initiatives and priorities concerning the unique needs of students who are blind and visually impaired regarding: the NH Accessible Educational Materials, American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota; New Hampshire Unified English Braille Project ; the NH Universal Design for Learning Academy ; The NH Assistive Technology Initiative; early learning needs in the transition process from early supports and services to school by age 3, and supports to improve postsecondary outcomes for individuals who are blind or visually impaired , including those with co-occurring disabilities;

This project will support the Bureau of Special Education in meeting the legislative mandate to provide technical assistance based on the following:

RSA 186-C III ~ the Department shall provide technical assistance and information to the school districts so that the districts may effectively and efficiently identify, clarify and address responsibilities under State and federal special education laws. Whenever technical assistance of a specialized nature, beyond that available in the Department, is required, the Department shall assume a leadership role in identifying sources of such assistance in other State agencies, the federal government, volunteer services or the private sector.

§300.704 (4)(i) State level activities: for support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training.

1.0 Minimum Requirements: In order to be considered for funding, a proposal must include evidence of the following minimum requirements:

- 1.1 Demonstrate capacity and willingness to participate in activities to improve outcomes for students who are blind and visually impaired as directed by the Bureau of Special Education.
- 1.2 Show evidence of the ability to work with representatives from State agencies, partner organizations, school districts, OSEP funded TA Centers, and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 Provide examples of effective communication mode skills (oral and written).
- 1.4 Expertise in facilitation and the provision of professional development and technical assistance based on universal design for learning and adult learning methods and strategies.

- 1.5 Knowledge of evidenced-based practices regarding the technology and accessibility for students who are blind and visually impaired; National Instructional Materials Accessible Standard under IDEA; American Printing House for the Blind including; products, services, resources, field services, and research, National Instructional Materials Accessible Center (NIMAC); the Federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, and Federal Quota Requirements.
- 1.6 Demonstrate fiscal management capacity including the requesting of funds from the Department as well as oversight and dissemination of resources (fiscal and other) to project participants (including staff);

2.0 Services to be Provided: The applicant will design and implement a New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development Initiative. The proposal will provide the following services annually relative to this Request for Proposals and consistent with the Minimum Requirements.

- 2.1 Create a current statewide model that builds the capacity to disseminate and implement the *New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development Guidelines* that includes the following actions:
 - 2.1.1 Design and coordinate TA/PD trainings that incorporate researched based practices and resources to implement the *New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development Guidelines*.
 - 2.1.2 Provide a timeline for each year of the project that includes when goals, objectives will be accomplished, and all activities will begin and end.
 - 2.1.3 Conduct an annual evaluation of the statewide trainings and make necessary improvements to the initiative for each year of implementation.
- 2.2 Coordinate the distribution of resources and information to schools, families, and students who are blind and visually impaired. The resources and information must support the findings and information of *New Hampshire Vision Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development Initiative*:
 - a. Section One: Identification and Referral
 - b. Section Two: Assessment of Unique Needs
 - c. Section Three: Instruction and Learning
 - d. Section Four : Support for Instruction and Learning
 - e. Section Five: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement
 - f. Appendixes
 1. IDEA 2004 Regulations Pertaining to Braille Instruction and National Instructional Materials Accessible Standard.
 2. IEP Plan Checklist: Accommodations and Modifications for students who are blind and visually impaired.
 3. National Association of State Directors of Special Education List of Assessment Tools for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired.
 4. Transition Skills Guidelines
 5. New Hampshire Certification Requirements for Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialists

2.3 Coordinate and provide training on the New Hampshire Technology and delivery of Accessible Materials for Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Children with Vision Loss, in the following areas:

- a. Train Teachers of the Visually Impaired in the area of Technology, Assistive Technology, and strategies in providing Accessible Educational Materials to students who are blind and visually impaired.
- b. Develop statewide research based practices to provide available assistive technologies and common ways to leverage technology to accelerate learning as well as provide timely and cost effective accessible educational materials to students who are blind and visually impaired.
- c. Create a community of practice model to promote knowledge sharing and the implementation of best practices in the area of technology and delivery of accessible educational materials for students who are blind and visually impaired.

2.4 Develop, disseminate and provide training on the New Hampshire Expanded Core Curriculum Resource Tool based on national models for school and families to identify and support the unique needs of students who are blind and visually impaired in the following content areas:

- a. Compensatory or functional academic skills, including communication modes
- b. Orientation and mobility
- c. Social interaction skills
- d. Independent living skills
- e. Recreation and leisure skills
- f. Career education
- g. Use of assistive technology
- h. Sensory efficiency skills
- i. Self-determination

2.5 Assist in coordinated training strategies for personnel preparation, professional development, and system development of certified personnel, including teachers of the Visually Impaired and other related service providers to students who are blind or visually impaired, Education interpreters, orientation and mobility specialists, and other related service providers to students who are blind or visually impaired.

2.6 Attend other assigned meetings that support the Bureau of Special Education initiatives.

3.0 REPORTING:

The successful individual(s)/organization shall provide the Bureau of Special Education with the following:

- 2.2 **Monthly Reporting:** Reports to be submitted with each invoice requesting payment will outline activities conducted and how the project met the purpose and priorities of the project.
- 2.3 **Annual Report:** Report detailing the accomplishments and challenges of the project, based on the evaluation of the project, within 30 days of the end of each project year. The first report will include strategies for improvement. The final report will include a comprehensive overview of the entire project. The Annual Reports will be posted on the NHDOE website.

4.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The successful individual(s) will inform the Department of any conflicts of interest (appearance of, or actual) prior to accepting the contract or while engaged in the contract.

5.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- 5.1 The State shall not be responsible for or pay any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.2 The NHDOE reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.3 The NHDOE reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. In addition, the distribution of this RFP shall not commit the State to issue a contract.
- 5.4 If the NHDOE chooses to award a contract in response to this RFP, the successful bidder shall be notified by letter. The NHDOE shall then develop a contract for Governor and Council approval. The contract shall incorporate, by reference, all provisions of this RFP and the successful bidder's proposal. In preparing a contract with the successful bidder, the NHDOE reserves the right to clarify any terms and conditions contained in the proposal.
- 5.5 Public announcements or news releases pertaining to the award of a contract shall not be made until approved by the Governor and Council.
- 5.6 The State shall not be responsible for any work performed by the successful bidder prior to the effective date of a contract approved by Governor and Council.
- 5.7 All obligations of the State, including the continuance of payments under an approved contract shall be contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of State, federal or other funds and in no event shall the State be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of those funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.
- 5.8 When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of the NHDOE Contracting Officer for this project.
- 5.9 Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the State and the contractor, all general provisions contained on the Form P-37 (see **Attachment A**) shall be incorporated into the contract.
- 5.10 The NHDOE expects to award a contract to the successful bidder. Unless there is a change in the program requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for this contract shall not exceed the amount bid in response to the **Services to be Provided** section of this RFP. The successful bidder will be required to provide the Department with the following information:
- A recent financial statement, and
 - A Certificate of Existence from the Secretary of State's Office
- In addition, the successful bidder will need to submit a Certificate of Authority authorizing the company to do business with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Education at the time the contract is signed.
- 5.11 **"Any information submitted as part of a bid in response to this request for proposal (RFP) (or request for bid (RFP) or request for information (RFI) may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP (RFI, or RFB) will be made accessible to the public online via the website Transparent NH (<http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>). Accordingly, business financial information and proprietary information such as trade secrets, business and financials models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas may be exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV. If you believe any information being submitted in response to a request for proposal, bid or information should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information, you must specifically identify that information in a letter to the agency."**
- 5.12 Audit
- §200.501 Audit Requirements
- (a) *Audit required.* A non-Federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(b) *Single audit.* A non-Federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single audit conducted in accordance with §200.514 Scope of audit except when it elects to have a program-specific audit conducted in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *Program-specific audit election.* When an auditee expends Federal awards under only one Federal program (excluding R&D) and the Federal program's statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the Federal award do not require a financial statement audit of the auditee, the auditee may elect to have a program-specific audit conducted in accordance with §200.507 Program-specific audits. A program-specific audit may not be elected for R&D unless all of the Federal awards expended were received from the same Federal agency, or the same Federal agency and the same pass-through entity, and that Federal agency, or pass-through entity in the case of a subrecipient, approves in advance a program-specific audit.

(d) *Exemption when Federal awards expended are less than \$750,000.* A non-Federal entity that expends less than \$750,000 during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards is exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in §200.503 Relation to other audit requirements, but records must be available for review or audit by appropriate officials of the Federal agency, pass-through entity, and Government Accountability Office.

(e) *Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC).* Management of an auditee that owns or operates a FFRDC may elect to treat the FFRDC as a separate entity for purposes of this part.

(f) *Subrecipients and Contractors.* An auditee may simultaneously be a recipient, a subrecipient, and a contractor. Federal awards expended as a recipient or a subrecipient are subject to audit under this part. The payments received for goods or services provided as a contractor are not Federal awards. Section §200.330 Subrecipient and contractor determinations sets forth the considerations in determining whether payments constitute a Federal award or a payment for goods or services provided as a contractor.

(g) *Compliance responsibility for contractors.* In most cases, the auditee's compliance responsibility for contractors is only to ensure that the procurement, receipt, and payment for goods and services comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of Federal awards. Federal award compliance requirements normally do not pass through to contractors. However, the auditee is responsible for ensuring compliance for procurement transactions which are structured such that the contractor is responsible for program compliance or the contractor's records must be reviewed to determine program compliance. Also, when these procurement transactions relate to a major program, the scope of the audit must include determining whether these transactions are in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of Federal awards.

(h) *For-profit subrecipient.* Since this part does not apply to for-profit subrecipients, the pass-through entity is responsible for establishing requirements, as necessary, to ensure compliance by for-profit subrecipients. The agreement with the for-profit subrecipient must describe applicable compliance requirements and the for-profit subrecipient's compliance responsibility. Methods to ensure compliance for Federal awards made to for-profit subrecipients may include pre-award audits, monitoring during the agreement, and post-award audits. See also §200.331 Requirements for pass-through entities.

[78 FR 78608, Dec. 26, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 75887, Dec. 19, 2014]

5.13 Debarment and Suspension

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION

The bidder/offer or certifies, by submission of this proposal or acceptance of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency. It further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the bidder/offer or/contractor or any lower tier participant is unable to

certify to this statement, it shall attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

5.14 Copyrights

The Department reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Department of Education purposes:

- (a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or contract under a grant or subgrant; and
- (b) Any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

5.15 New Hampshire Federal Funds Handbook. All contracts, including this proposal must meet requirements in the New Hampshire Federal Funds Handbook:

http://www.education.nh.gov/documents/fed_funds_handbk.pdf

5.16 Disclaimer Information:

For any presentations, flyers, or products developed under the NH Deaf Education Initiative there needs to be the following disclaimer noted: This document was produced with funds provided by the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education federal discretionary funds and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. While permission to reprint this publication is not necessary the citation should be: New Hampshire Vision Technical Assistance and Professional Development Initiative (2017-2020). New Hampshire Department of Education, Concord, NH Authors.

6.0 LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND CONTRACT PERIOD

- 6.1 The Department anticipates that the total cost for all proposed products and services will not exceed \$300,000.00 for the length of the contract.
- 6.2 The Department expects to award a contract effective July 1, 2017, or upon Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful contractor(s). Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for each individual contract shall not exceed the amount of \$300,000.00.

7.0 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- 7.1 An original and four (4) identical hard copies of a formal proposal must be received at the Department of Education no later than 4:00pm, Friday, December 9, 2016. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for review. Each application shall include a narrative or other directly relevant material as needed to address the areas described in 1.0 through 3.0 of this RFP. The original documents must be submitted unbound and in such a manner as to facilitate photocopying.
- 7.2 Proposals will be evaluated to determine if the applicant has the ability to accomplish the **2.0 Services to be Provided** and meets or exceeds the **1.0 Minimum Requirements**. This evaluation will be based on the applicant's ability to provide evidence of the following criteria:
 - 7.2.1 **Significance of Proposal:** Description of applicant's capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their personal experience and/or company's experience in developing and implementing a program of this type, to include references as applicable. Please identify the specific subsections of 1.0 as they are addressed (see 1.0 Minimum Requirements) (10 points);
 - 7.2.2 **Quality of Services:** Describe how you will accomplish the *Services to be Provided* in 2.0 of this RFP, including activities and strategies that will achieve the desired outcomes. Also identify roles, responsibilities and partners to be involved for the various activities/strategies. Please identify the subsection(s) of the *Services to be Provided* as you address them in your narrative. (15 points);

- 7.2.3 **Content knowledge**, including but not limited to, knowledge and expertise to promote efforts to improve outcomes for students who are blind and visually impaired (10 points);
 - 7.2.4 **Technical Skills**, including but not limited to: data collection and analysis, adult learning strategies and effective technical assistance, facilitation and communication skills. (10 points);
 - 7.2.5 **Management Plan:** Provide a work-plan, timeline, milestones or benchmarks in accordance with the activities to carry out *Services to be Provided* in 2.0 of this RFP (10 points);
 - 7.2.6 **Personnel and Partners:** Provide a listing of the individuals who will have responsibilities within this proposed project, their titles, qualifications and duties, and the amount of time each will devote to the project. Identify key partners, describe their anticipated participation and provide documentation of their commitment (10 points);
 - 7.2.7 **Adequacy of Resources:** Provide a detailed budget, including budget notes/justification, which clearly explains the relationship between proposed activities and expenditures. The budget should be broken down into three (3) fiscal year; FY'18 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018), FY'19 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019) and FY'20 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020) not exceed \$100,000.00 for each year. Indirect costs may not exceed 8%. (25 points)
 - 7.2.8 **Evaluation Plan:** Describe your comprehensive plan for the evaluation of the proposed project's activities, effectiveness and impact (10 points).
- 7.3 In order to provide bidders with the opportunity to present a comprehensive response to this RFP, no page limit has been established. Applicants are reminded that successful applications are typically clear, concise, and well organized. It is strongly recommended that applications be organized around the elements listed in *Services to be Provided* and further addressed in the information packet. Supplementary materials may be submitted as part of the application, however, these should be limited to items that substantively explain or expand upon information presented in the basic application. All supplementary materials should be referenced with the basic application. Four (4) sets of any supplementary material should be submitted.
- 7.4 Qualified applicants may be asked to provide the Department with additional written materials or documentation of qualifications, and may be asked to meet with Department Administrators or their designee to discuss their proposal.
- 7.5 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Alternate W-9 Form" (**see Attachment B**).
- 7.6 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Cover Page" (**see Attachment C**).
- 7.7 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted by 4:00pm, Friday, December 9, 2016 to

Barbara Dauphinais, Program Specialist
New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

8.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Procedures outlined in this RFP.

The Department reserves the right to interview applicants with the highest average scores for their proposal, but the Department shall be under no obligation to interview applicants. If the Department conducts an interview, it will be done by a team who will develop structured questions and scoring criteria that will clarify the applicant's ability to fulfill this RFP. If the Department chooses to award contract(s) relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidders that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation and/or interview process.

9.0 Post Submission Deadline

After the submission deadline, the Department will post, on its website, the number of proposals that it received from vendors.

After the Department's review and selection of a vendor, it will post all vendor names and their rank or score five days prior to submission of the Governor and Council contract packet to the Department of Administrative Services.

A vendor questioning the Department's identification of the selected vendor may request that the Department review its selection process. The request shall be in writing and be submitted to the Department within five (5) business days of the posting of the bid results, rank or score.

The Department has five (5) business days to review the request and issue a written response either affirming its initial selection of a vendor or cancelling the RFP. No hearing shall be held as part of the review. The outcome of the Department's review is not subject to appeal.

Enclosures:

Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form

Attachment B: ALT W-9 Form

Attachment C: Cover Page